



Palm Reader

An unofficial newsletter of Palmerston Indoor Bowling Club

Issue 3 February 2003

Jumping for Joy

Were you there the moment Kingsthorpe won the Denny? It was the weekend when Palmerston was the home of the national club championships, the Denny Cup and the Denny Plate. Cumbria against Kingsthorpe in the cup final on Sunday afternoon. The game had reached its climax. Two rinks had already completed their games and the other two were playing their last end. Cumbria were desperate as Kingsthorpe had an 8 shot lead. On one rink Cumbria killed the last end and began to replay it. Then the other rink completed their last end - one shot to Kingsthorpe.

That was the moment the place erupted. No-one needed to be told that the final end was irrelevant; Kingsthorpe had won. The noise was deafening as the

whole Kingsthorpe team leapt in the air. Was this really just a game of bowls on a Sunday afternoon?

"This is bowls, Jim" said Spock, ".. but not as we know it." Running, jumping and leaping on the green. Coloured shirts (not even much grey in the hair!). Cheerleaders. Loads of spectators, standing room only. Noise of horns and whistles and loud cheers with every significant bowl. Bowlers so intense that they produce incredible shots despite all the hullabaloo. Pity the two barmaids too busy to watch. What atmosphere!

If only the young people of this district could have seen this, we'd have no shortage of potential talent for the future.

Dateline 29th March 2003

This is the date of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) to be held at Palmerston starting at 10.00 am. This is an important meeting and for the benefit of new members and maybe old members (not age!) to explain why perhaps I should define how our Club is organised.

Palmerston IBC is a registered Limited Company, and registered at Companies House. It therefore has to comply with strict company practices and accordingly has a Board of Directors under the Chairmanship of Bill Bowshell. The Board consists of 9 Directors, all of whom will be identified at the AGM.

The major function of the Board is to ensure that the Club can meet its financial commitments at all times and therefore be able to repay the considerable loans it undertook in order to establish Palmerston IBC as a going concern. You will hear at the meeting how this is being achieved. Other areas of responsibility include the maintenance of the building fabric, the restaurant and the bar facilities.

There is another major committee and this is called the Joint Management Committee (JMC). This committee is

headed by the Club President and he/she is ably assisted by 2 Vice-

Presidents. You will have gathered that the Club is a mixed club and the Presidency is rotated between the ladies' vice-president and the men's vice-president. The President remains in office for one year, then at the AGM the appropriate vice-president assumes the Presidency. This process is automatic and therefore only the vacant vice-presidency is offered for election at the AGM.

The day to day running of the Club is organised through the JMC. This committee is responsible for all the bowling activities that are required to meet the aspirations of you, the members. Here are some of the tasks that the committee undertakes on your behalf:- Organise Leagues, Club Competitions, Friendly Matches, Roll-Ups, Bowls Lockers and Rink Maintenance to name but a few.

Both the Board Members and the JMC Members are elected at the AGM. It is clear therefore that it is important for the smooth running of the Club that you as a member attend the AGM to vote for your choice of candidate. This is really IMPORTANT. A list of all candidates is posted in the Club giving adequate time for those wishing to join the committees to put their name forward and

have it proposed and seconded. If more than one candidate is seeking election for the same position then a ballot will be held at the AGM.

Another reason to attend the AGM is that this is the forum for you to air your views and opinions on the past year's performance and hopefully suggest improvements for the future. Should any member wish to propose a change to the Club rules then this must be done in writing to the Club Secretary at least 7 days before the date of the AGM (signed by proposer and seconder). These proposals will be posted within the Club for all members to see. All suggested changes should quote the page number and clause number requiring alteration. Each requested amendment will be subject to a vote at the AGM.

I would ask you to remember that Palmerston IBC belongs to you and it is up to you to elect officers to the committees who you feel will best serve your needs as members or even better volunteer to join one of the committees. Also remember that you can only change Club policy or Rules by attending the AGM.

See you there.

Ray Gregory (Club Secretary)

Did you know ?

by Roy Mudd Vice-President

Did you know that most of the assignments that are undertaken at Palmerston are done on a completely voluntary basis.

Every Saturday morning, two of our members arrive at the centre at approx. 7.15 a.m. and vacuum the carpet, and clean the ditches

The secretary and treasurer are present every day dealing with correspondence, visitors and money.

The stewards you see on the desk are volunteers who undertake a four hour duty, collecting rink fees, answering the telephone, dealing with queries, loaning equipment, selling badges and stickers amongst numerous other things. For this service the steward is given two rink fee vouchers valued at £1.50 - this represents 75p per hour ! It would be nice if we had a few more volunteers to help the service along - what about you giving up a little time, just talk to John Vicary, the Chief Steward.

After you have finished your game, are you one of the players who picks up the bowls and goes, leaving glasses, cups and scraps of paper on the tables for someone else to pick up. We do have paid cleaning contractors, but not for that sort of service

Did you know that we have nearly 1000 members, and yet often we cannot honour some friendly fixtures because there are not enough players. We also very often have to telephone members to remind them that they are due to play in a game, but they have not bothered to tick their names on the board.

When you have been a captain of a side it is essential that you know that the players are going to turn up and play. Nothing is more embarrassing than having to apologize for a missing player.

Would you be willing to put your name to an on call at short notice telephone list

when you could be contacted if there was a short fall in players?

Please, please check the fixtures board if you have put your name down for selection.

As a player in a friendly game, have you ever volunteered to help put the names up on the score boards, or can I identify you as the player who, when the Captain/President of the day is trying to take money, sort teams, deal with special meals glibly says what rink am I playing on? I thought you would have sorted that by now.

Did you know that the Captains spend hours selecting the sides, writing them out and publishing them ! This also applies to the competition secretary with the draws and playing dates.

It is not too much to ask you to tick names, or to play games by the specified dates.

Did you know that your leagues run so smoothly because the league secretaries spend a lot of the summer months producing schedules, and stewards sheets, and compiling the Handbook. When you think about having a moan about your own little problem, just stand back and have a look at the overall picture of what has to be done so that you can enjoy your game of bowls. I hear the statement - I've paid my membership fee and I am entitled to this and that. The members who do all the work have also paid their membership fees, and are entitled to a little courtesy, thought and consideration. Constructive criticism is very welcome, but why not base it on Palmerston us instead of little selfish me!

We all enjoy the bar. Your Bar Manager sees that it is stocked and staffed, and is there to receive the deliveries, and deal with the money taken. After a big game this is no small sum.

We have a raffle at every game which provides an income for the Club.

Really we need a person who is willing to take responsibility for this. It should not be the Treasurer, or the Catering Manager

who are keeping it going at the moment

The Joint Management Committee meets every month. The member offices are listed in the Rules and Constitution Handbook.

What's that you ask - you need a copy. These are the people who are always referred to in the phrase - They should be doing this or they should be doing that. The Board of Directors keeps us on the straight and narrow financially, and they have steered us to a healthy monetary state after the first five years.

Did you know that up to Christmas is a busy time of the year for all sorts of competitions, and rinks need to be booked so that they can be played off by the required date. So casual bowlers I am afraid that you will have to be patient, but why not join in with the drive sessions on a Monday and a Friday morning, they are great fun, and you do meet and talk with other members, instead of your own little circle of friends.

The barrier across the road is a pain. It is there however to try and keep out the "Travelers" who would come in and desecrate the area. Please spare a thought for the steward, who from time to time has to open and close it for vans and coaches. Even more so for the steward who has to close it late at night, in the dark, in the pouring rain with a padlock and key that is a fiddle to operate.

Did you know that the members who set up the Club are getting older, and are gradually taking a back seat. This is the danger time when the standards of the Club begin to slide. It is up to the membership to make sure that this does not happen. Are you a keen, helpful, working club member, or just a member of the PIBC.

Just a few thoughts from me the Vice President. Look around you. Do you see anything that would benefit the Club, and could you do it.

Security and security video, raffles, running drives, general maintenance, filling vacant posts, stewarding, helping with social events.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Palm Editor,

The time has now arrived when we must encourage members to take part in friendly matches, in particular single sex away matches. If we do not other clubs will not come to us. This will affect us in many ways. We don't have to look too far away to see clubs who had their good caterers, then were left for a time with none, to be

replaced by a second rate lot. We lose income all round. Money from visitors in rink fees, meals and over the bar is new money. You also do not attract new young members who like competition if you become a social club that plays bowls.

A small group of members set out against great odds and a lot of dedication, to give us a first class bowling club. Although the social side of the club is important and a very good way to raise money, bowls and bowling should always come first and be uppermost in our minds.

I would not like to see, as was suggested at the last AGM to force members to play in friendlies. With a little encouragement bowlers should wish to play for their club. To make things easier, all away matches could be by coach. Funded by some form of social activity, the social side supporting bowls. (Ed: this already happens)

Just a small crack can become a large hole.

Ian F. Dobson

Dear Palm Editor,

I agree that the format for weekly leagues should be looked at. We started the best way possible - friends, outdoor club mates forming teams. But next season will be our 7th and one asks oneself "Am I here for life?" If you can pick the time you wish to play then I think drawn teams are a good idea. The draw could be in February or March, before next season.

I would also suggest that one or more leagues are changed into two wood triples. This is a very good discipline for inter-club teamwork. With only a 2 hour game rinks give a player a very limited game. This would bring to the notice of selectors the better players in a way that trials do not.

It would get over traffic problem at 6.15pm if the club started at 9am not 9.30am, with no ½ hour break at lunch time. I feel this could be solved.

Ian F. Dobson.

Dear Palm Editor,

The Wednesday evening triples leagues were turned into promotion and relegation leagues with the idea of stimulating greater competition between the teams, thereby hopefully improving the standard of play.

At the moment the top league commences play at 20.15 with the lower league commencing at 18.15. Before the leagues were formed in this way team leaders, were asked if they wanted to participate. Our team initially said no but after cajoling by the league secretary we reluctantly agreed to participate in the top league. We were reluctant to take part because of the later starting time of the top league. When talking to other people many of the other teams took the the same view.

Because of the unpopularity of the the later starting time teams in both leagues have a dis-incentive to win because the majority of players prefer the 18.15 to 20.15 session. If the starting time for the two leagues were reversed i.e. the top league to commence at 18.15 I believe the incentive to win for both leagues would be restored.

I know there is an argument that the earlier starting time could make it difficult for some of the better players who work to make the 18.15 session. However in these days of flexible working hours I do not believe this is a problem for the vast majority of players. Another, though probably more difficult solution, would be

to transpose the Wednesday and Friday evening sessions completely. This would probably accommodate the odd person who works and cannot make the 18.15 session on a Wednesday, because most people finish work early on a Friday.

William Wallace

Dear Palm Editor,

LADIES TROUSERS

I am one of the many Palmerston lady bowlers who would like to have the freedom of choice to wear trousers to bowl in on all occasions. The EWIBA actively encourage Indoor Bowls Clubs to allow their lady members to wear trousers, both for competition and roll ups. Regulation bowling trousers like regulation bowling skirts have been available for many years.

It is a Palmerston Club rule that is preventing this freedom of choice. On all previous occasions when this subject has been raised the management committee have quoted the EWIBA rules. These rules have subsequently changed and the committee now choose to disregard them. (Ed: the committee can't change the rules - only the members can at the AGM)

Ladies if you want to wear trousers to bowl in you must act to change the rules.

On another matter – ENCOURAGING THE CLUB'S YOUTH SQUAD.

Surely, it is common sense that you are not going to attract young girls and boys (particularly girls) until you allow some freedom of dress. What is wrong with girls and boys (in fact everyone) wearing a club track suit to bowl in. The Club should take note of other youth organisations for example the Guiding Association who have realised that if you don't keep up with the times you lose your youngsters to other more attractive pastimes.

I am sure that there are many young people who would be willing to give the game a try if they didn't have to look like their granny before being allowed to take part!!! I am writing this as a mother of two girls who I know would have had a go at the game if they didn't have to "look so silly" before they were allowed on the green.

Julia Ellis

Dear Palm Editor,

Just a few suggestions we thought we would air:

As good a facility as Palmerston is we

should never be too proud to borrow ideas from other fellow indoor bowls clubs & complexes. We thought it would be an excellent idea if grab rails, to assist the not so agile among us to step up or down from the green, could be introduced. These have been noticed at many other clubs, a good example would be Banister and Riverside. Banister have four at each end of the green ie one between two rinks. Could these be implemented please.

Our next point is difficult to express because in no way do we wish to criticise or berate the fantastic effort and time devoted by officers and committees in organising fund raising for the benefit of the club. However, these efforts would be wasted if they weren't supported by the members who have proved in the last five years their wonderful support. We suggest the Christmas Draw is a good opportunity for the members to enjoy a bumper thank you each year with all monies for tickets being spent on prizes and no profit being taken by the club. It would certainly increase the number of prizes available.

Numbers of players registered in mixed fours league teams. We suggest it would make life a lot easier for members personal commitments, ie holiday breaks, illness etc. if 8 players for each team could be registered. The reasoning is that at present you have 7 members making up a team, if two of them go on an extended holiday, as often happens, there are only five members left which means that they are practically bowling every week. This is particularly inconvenient if they play in the weekend leagues when sometimes you might wish to do something else on a Saturday. If you had 8 members, then you could still keep the rotation going enabling couples to play two out of every three games.

As Palmerston is a mixed club, why is it that the men's tops and ladies tops are going to be a completely different design. When Palmerston play the Egham competition, for instance, wouldn't it be great if they all wore the same tops making them look like a team from the same club. Wasn't it possible that the two committees involved could not have got together and agreed on just one design. It would have also been an idea if the members had had a choice of design, style, material etc. after all we are all adults and able to make choices. It would appear that a golden opportunity has been missed where the choice of possibly a pale blue shirt and gold collar and cuffs for both men and women would have been distinctly different and, indeed, a true club top.

John & Vivienne Bramble

Should we run two men's teams ?

by Russell Gadd

I think the time has come for Palmerston to run 2 men's teams from next season. What does this mean and why do I think this? Let me explain and put the case for and against as I see it, so you can make your own judgement.

This year we entered the following competitions: 1) The Bramley Bowl, which is a county league with two divisions and 6 teams per division with 2 teams promoted and relegated each season. 2) The Denny Cup, a national club knockout competition with first round losers entering the Plate, (the finals were recently played at Palmerston). A great deal of prestige attaches to this. 3) There is also the London and Southern Counties Shield, again a fairly prestigious knockout competition. These are all 4 rink competitions requiring 16 players. 4) Also we enter an over 60's double rink knockout and a single rink knockout.

Our current team philosophy, which has served us well enough over our first 5 years, is to basically run only one team of 16 players, which in the opinion of the selectors (another story!) forms our strongest 4 rinks. There are however occasions when some competitions coincide. This year the London and Southern Counties clashed with the Bramley Bowl, so we needed another 16 players. Also the second round of the Denny Plate clashed with the Bramley. Basically these 16 players played only these two matches as we put our first team in the Bramley. Not only that but they were up against the first teams of the opposing clubs (who unlike us play their second

team in the Bramley) and found it very hard. It must have been very demoralising for these 16 to be asked to play only these matches.

I propose that we adopt the same approach as many other clubs. The first team to play the most prestigious events, including the Denny Cup/Plate and the London and Southern Counties and the second team to play the Bramley Bowl. This would then bring 32 players properly into the Club teams. The second team would get a guaranteed 10 matches. The first team would get at least 3 matches from the Denny and the L&SC. To add to all this we should enter the Famous Grouse Top Ten Competition (needing 10 bowlers), which is run on a round robin basis as a first round, giving at least another 4 matches for the first team. A total of 7 matches with a realistic prospect of further rounds of the Denny Plate and L&SC.

The advantages of running 2 teams like this are firstly to bring another 16 players into regular top inter-club competition and secondly for our first team players to play more matches against the best local bowlers. Over time this can only strengthen our players and increase our overall club bowling success. I believe that unless we do this we will never come anywhere near to the likes of Victory and Atherley.

Initially of course, we will be up against it. We could easily get knocked out of the Denny Cup in the first round and we may survive only another 1 or 2 rounds of the Denny Plate. Also a weaker Bramley Bowl team is quite likely to be relegated to the lower division, especially considering the

struggle we are having this year.

The likelihood of being relegated from the first division of the Bramley is probably the main argument against my proposal. There are members who would prefer to keep our best players in the Bramley to try to stay in division 1. My answer is that I think, if relegated (not a certainty), the second team would certainly compete effectively in division 2 and in time fight for promotion back to division 1. So why should we have a need to stay in the top division?

I believe there will be other benefits. Bowlers disappointed in being dropped from the team would be available for the second team. Also bowlers proving themselves in the second team would be in line to win first team places. This would lead to less disappointment and more objective team selection.

There's been a reluctance for us to enter the Famous Grouse top 10, I believe on the grounds of cost. I think this is a mistake as the costs are small unless you progress beyond the round robin stage. First this is unlikely for a number of years unless we do start to beat the likes of Victory. If we eventually do - surely this is a goal worth financing for the prestige it would bring to the club - which also will tend to attract more good bowlers and young competitive prospects.

Although this proposal is my ultimate objective, if desired, it would be possible to make this change gradually. We could mix the teams to some extent in the first few seasons, rather than keeping them entirely separate, by strengthening the second team with some first team bowlers. Some other clubs like Atherley do this. Is this perhaps a halfway house towards our long term aim and the best of both worlds? Let's start the ball (bowl?) rolling next season.

Competition Secretaries report

MENS by Brian Cleaver

All the men's competitions have been completed and I would like to thank everyone for making my job relatively easy by getting 98% of the matches finished on time - well done and good luck to you all in the County KO stages.

Finals week this year will be of a different format - starting on Monday 7th April and finishing on Saturday 12th April with the Ladies', Men's and Junior's Singles Finals. This will be followed by the presentation of ALL the Club Competition and League winner trophies.

Please keep a watch on the noticeboards for further information regarding Finals Week.

LADIES by Jill Rowe

The competitions are now well under way and so far the spectators have been treated to some fine bowling in the Singles, Pairs and Triples. The general consensus among the ladies taking part was how much they had enjoyed the bowling. We hope that their enjoyment will be perceived by other club members and encourage them to take part in the competitions next year. It would be gratifying to see an increase in the number of participants in the club competitions. There is a number of creditable lady bowlers in the club who do not put themselves forward. We feel sure that if they did participate they would enjoy a very good afternoon's bowling.

Editorial

First an apology for not running a January issue with the survey as promised. This was due to heavy personal commitments. I hope to do a survey perhaps early next season. But I really do need some help to compile and collate responses as I asked last time - no one came forward.

Also I now realise that I can't realistically do two jobs - the newsletter and match secretary. Although I'm reluctant to drop this after only 1 season in the job, I am giving up the match secretary position at this coming AGM to concentrate on the newsletter next season. So I am appealing to the membership for someone to come forward to take over as Match Secretary. It's not particularly onerous, in fact it's quite a nice job - my problem is that I get headaches with too much computer work, it's not a time problem. You don't actually need to use a computer but it helps to keep the records up to date and to type letters. I'll give all the help necessary to take it on, including taking over the computer work if required.